

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS AT DALLAS

F.A.P. FABBRICA ARMI PIETTA)
DI PIETTA GIUSEPPE & C. SRL)
Via Mandalossa 102-25064)
Gussago, Brescia, Italy,)

Plaintiff,)

v.)

Case No.: _____

COLT'S MANUFACTURING CO., LLC,)
545 New Park Avenue)
West Hartford, Connecticut 06110,)

Defendant.)

COMPLAINT FOR DECLARATORY JUDGMENT

Now comes the Plaintiff, F.A.P. FABBRICA ARMI PIETTA di Pietta Giuseppe & C. Srl. ("Pietta"), by and through counsel, and for its complaint against the Defendant, Colt's Manufacturing Company, LLC ("Colt"), states as follows:

NATURE OF ACTION AND RELIEF SOUGHT

1. This is an action under the Declaratory Judgment Act, 28 U.S.C. § 2201, *et seq.*, for a declaratory judgment of non-infringement of Colt's trademarks or trade dress rights relative to Colt's "Python" model revolver (the "Colt Python revolver").

2. This action arises out of Colt's demand that Pietta refrain from manufacturing, marketing, and distribution of a .357Mag. double action revolver that Colt terms a "knockoff" Python revolver (the "D.A. revolver .357Mag").¹

¹ Pietta has not determined what, if anything, will be designated the "model" name for the D.A. revolver .357Mag., and this nomenclature is being utilized for the purposes of this complaint only.

3. Pietta seeks a declaration that its manufacture, marketing, and distribution of the D.A. revolver .357Mag does not infringe Colt's rights relative to the Colt Python revolver.

PARTIES

4. Pietta is an Italian general limited liability company (società a responsabilità limitata or Srl), with its principal place of business at Via Mandalossa 102-25064, Gussago, Brescia, Italy. Pietta is engaged in the business of manufacturing firearms.

5. Colt is a Delaware limited liability company with its principal place of business at 545 New Park Avenue, West Hartford, Connecticut 06110. Colt is engaged in the business of manufacturing firearms. Colt's registered agent is Corporation Service Company at the registered address of 50 Weston Street, Hartford, Ct. 06120.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

6. This Court has subject matter jurisdiction over this action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. 1331, 1338 as it arises under the Constitution and laws of the United States, specifically Declaratory Judgment Act, 28 U.S.C. § 2201, and the Lanham Act, 15 U.S.C. §§ 1052 and 1125, *et seq.*

7. Venue is proper in the Northern District of Texas, as Pietta intends to introduce and exhibit the D.A. revolver .357Mag at the National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers Expo in Grapevine, Texas in October 2020. Colt, likewise, is expected to exhibit and display the Colt Python at the 2020 NASGW Expo.

FACTS

8. Pietta intends to manufacture, market, and distribute a .357 mag. caliber revolver, the D.A. revolver .357Mag.

9. D.A. revolver .357Mag does not use any of Colt's trademarks or logos.

10. Functional and other appearance aspects of the Colt Python revolver are in the public domain and may be copied freely.

11. The look and functional form of the Colt Python revolver has already been copied by both Smith & Wesson (without the ventilated rib) and Dan Wesson (with and without the ventilated rib).

12. CZ-USA has also recently resumed production of the Dan Wesson 715 model. *See*, Ayoob article, “The Colt Python,” *Accurate Rifle*, November, 2003, Exhibit A.

13. The Korth revolver and the Arminius HW 357 Magnum Double Revolver are also comparable in design to the Colt Python revolver. *See*, Korth Combat .357 review and www.thehighroad.org print-out, Exhibit B. *See also*, Arminius print-out, Exhibit C.

13. A November 2003 article noted that when Smith & Wesson introduced its Model 586, known as the L-frame, in 1980, it was “copying the Python so slavishly that both brands would fit in the same holster and use the same speed loader...” *See*, Ex. A.

14. The November 2003 article further noted that “Dan Wesson has copied the distinctive Python silhouette a decade earlier, and the Ruger GP-100 soon shared the same configuration,” and that “[t]he Colt Python was no longer unique.” *See*, Ex. A.

15. Many forums and internet sites confirm the fact that it is well known that the Colt Python revolver design is no longer unique. *See*, Exhibits D 1-3.

16. Upon information and belief, there are no patents owned by Colt related to design of the Colt Python revolver,

17. Colt has been aware of the existence of Colt Python revolver replicas for decades and has not stopped their production.

18. The appearance of the Colt Python revolver is not sufficiently unique and distinctive such that the Colt Python revolver is entitled to trade dress protection for a revolver it for years ceased to manufacture or advertise.

19. Pietta does not intend to use any Colt trademark, including the Colt word mark, Colt logos, and the Python trademark in connection with its sale and distribution of the D.A. revolver .357Mag”.

20. Pietta does not intend to make any description or representation that could be misleading or cause confusion that there is any affiliation, connection or association of Pietta with Colt.

21. The D.A. revolver .357Mag and the Colt Python revolver differ in substantive, material, and other ways.

22. Unlike the Colt Python revolver, the Pietta Model 357 revolver will be composed of a rifled tube and a barrel cover.

23. Unlike the Colt Python revolver, the cylinder of the D.A. revolver .357Mag will be one solid piece rather than made from multiple parts.

24. Unlike the Colt Python revolver, the D.A. revolver .357Mag will not bear markings of any kind which containing the words “Colt,” “Python,” or anything substantially similar.

25. Pursuant to the Gun Control Act, all Colt manufactured products are required to be marked with Colt’s name and the city/state of manufacture.

26. Pursuant to the Gun Control Act, Pietta’s products are not only required to be marked with Pietta’s name and foreign location of manufacture, but they are also required to be

marked with the name, city, and state of the US importer upon import into the United States, further distinguishing any Pietta firearm from any Colt firearm.

27. In the event that Pietta manufactures the D.A. revolver .357Mag. to be branded under more than one brand, such branding as well as all markings required under the Gun Control Act indicating the manufacturer and importer will be marked on all such firearms.

COUNT I
28 U.S.C. 2201(a) Declaratory Judgment

28. Paragraphs 1-27 are incorporated as if restated in full herein.

29. Colt claims that Pietta's manufacture, marketing, and distribution of the Pietta Model 357 revolver would constitute trademark infringement, trade dress infringement, or unfair competition, and, under a threat of litigation, demands that Pietta refrain from manufacture, marketing, and distribution of the Pietta Model 357 revolver.

30. An actual, present, and justiciable controversy exists between Pietta and Colt concerning Pietta's manufacture, marketing, and distribution of the Pietta Model 357 revolver relative to Colt's rights related to the Colt Python revolver.

31. There is no likelihood of confusion between the D.A. revolver .357Mag and the Colt Python revolver.

32. Pietta seeks declaratory judgment from this Court that Pietta's manufacture, marketing, and distribution of the D.A. revolver .357Mag does not constitute trademark infringement under the Lanham Act or any other applicable federal or state law.

33. Pietta seeks declaratory judgment from this Court that Pietta's manufacture, marketing, and distribution of the D.A. revolver .357Mag does not constitute trade dress infringement under the Lanham Act or any other applicable federal or state law.

34. Pietta seeks declaratory judgment from this Court that Pietta's sale of the D.A. revolver .357Mag does not constitute unfair competition under the Lanham Act or any other applicable federal or state law.

35. Pietta seeks declaratory judgment from this Court that Colt has suffered no, and will not suffer any, damages or loss of goodwill as a result of Pietta's manufacture, marketing, and distribution of the D.A. revolver .357Mag.

36. Pietta seeks declaratory judgment that Colt is not entitled to any injunctive relief or damages under 15 U.S.C. § 1125 or any other applicable federal or state law.

WHEREFORE, Pietta prays that the Court enter judgment in its favor as follows:

- A) declaring that Pietta's manufacture, marketing, and distribution of the D.A. revolver .357Mag does not constitute trademark infringement, trade dress infringement, or unfair competition under the Lanham Act or any other applicable federal or state law;
- B) declaring that Colt is not entitled to any injunctive relief with respect to the manufacture, marketing, and distribution of the D.A. revolver .357Mag;
- C) declaring that Pietta is entitled to manufacture, market, and distribute the D.A. revolver .357Mag;
- D) awarding Pietta its costs, expenses, and attorneys' fees in this actin; and
- E) awarding such other further relief to which Pietta may be entitled as a matter of law or equity, or which the Court deems to be just and appropriate.

DATED: June 1, 2020

Respectfully submitted,

Padfield and Stout, LLP

/s/ S. Gary Werley

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Exhibit A

and
maintenance
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"The Colt Python"

by **Massad Ayoob**

The Accurate Rifle, November 2003

(**Precision Shooting, Inc.**; used with permission)

Famous for its distinctive profile and top-flight craftsmanship, the flagship of the Colt fleet also incorporated unique performance-enhancing engineering innovations.

Pedigree

According to firearms historian Larry Wilson, "H.M. (His Majesty) Hussein I of Jordan ordered a limited number of Pythons, in 4" and 6" barrels, as gifts to his selected friends. Casing and barrel were embossed with His Majesty's crest. The Python for King Juan Carlos of Spain bore his name in flush gold on the side-plate. Among other celebrated recipients: King Khalid and Prince Fahed (Saudi Arabia), King Hassan (Morocco), Sheik Zyed (United Arab Emirates), President Anwar Sadat (Egypt), and President Hafez Assad (Syria)." (1)

Elvis Presley, a gun collector, loved Pythons. Actor David Soul used a 4" Python to outshoot Dirty Harry for the department championship in "Magnum Force," a film that caused a brief spurt of Python popularity in the marketplace, and a 6" version as the character Hutch on TV's "Starsky and Hutch." In the real world, Paul B. Weston, ace handgun expert of the NYPD, often used the Python in matches. He sang its praises, calling its famously smooth mechanism "a friction-free environment." Bill Jordan, well known for his preference for Smith & Wessons, owned and liked the 4" Python. Reeves Jungkind, pistolsmith and Texas state trooper, won numerous police combat championships with the Pythons he tuned, as did many of his customers.

A Brief History

From the beginning, reviewers called it the "Rolls-Royce of handguns", though official Colt historian Larry Wilson was a little more reserved and said, "The Python is the Rolls-Royce of Colt revolvers." (2) In the "1953-54 Gun Guide," General Julian Hatcher predicted, perhaps unknowingly, this forthcoming evolution in double action Colt revolvers.

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"From time to time and from year to year, changes and improvements have been made in the (Colt) Officers Model target revolver," he wrote. "Some of these are minor improvements, due to new processes of manufacture or new materials available; but the major model changes have usually been the result of suggestions made to the company's experts by outstanding target shots." (3)

The firm had noticed that many serious shooters slug lead weights or welding rod under the barrels of their target revolvers to add stabilizing weight, and that King's Gun Works had made a cottage industry of installing ventilated ribs on top with target sights. Both features would be added. A redesigned mechanism done originally for the service grade "Three-Fifty-Seven" and .38 caliber Trooper service revolvers announced in 1954 would be integrated into the new gun, featuring a flat-faced hammer and a spring-loaded firing pin that "floated" in the frame. It would have the most deluxe finish Colt could put on a handgun, the lustrous Royal Blue.

When factory insiders gave me the scoop on the Python, they said the key to its fabulous finish was in the polishing operation, not the bluing tanks. The most skilled polishers were put to work on the Pythons in a process that finished with 400 grit emery, which they described as roughly the texture of talcum powder. The polish showed up better on blue guns than nickel, and even better on bright stainless, such as the Python Ultimate and the exquisite limited run Double Diamond.

Almost as an afterthought, it was decided to chamber the Python for .357 Magnum. Demand for that round seemed heavy, and after all, the gun would be perfectly accurate with the shorter, milder .38 Special target ammo they expected most customers to use in it. A contest was held within the factory to name the new entry. Colt's Cobra, the first aluminum frame .38 snubnose, had been a best seller since its introduction five years before. Perhaps thinking serpentine names were lucky, the firm chose the entry of an employee whose identity seems to have since been lost to firearms history. The name was "Python."

The gun was an instant hit. While dedicated target sixgunners like Weston flocked to it, the Python had the misfortune to arrive just before the bullseye shooters switched en masse to autoloaders for the center-fire events where the .38 revolver had previously ruled. But if this market was foreclosed by changing tastes, others opened invitingly. The police saw it as a prestige service revolver, and their clamoring for a 4" version was soon answered. The Python had first been offered with 6" barrel only. Meanwhile, police combat revolver competition was about to start up, and the Python was virtually made for it, with the heaviest barrel then available giving more up-front weight to steady the gun against the double action pull demanded by the rules for more than half of the PPC sequence. Finally, people who loved guns were instantly taken by the obvious quality, superb workmanship, and unique appearance evinced by the Python. Despite a price tag of \$125 at introduction, the guns sold as fast as Colt could produce them. In 1955, the highest priced prestige revolver on the market before the Python was S&W's big .357 Magnum, later to be designated the Model 27, which then sold for \$110.

A nickel finish was soon added, and much later, the Python was offered in stainless. A small number were produced chambered for .38 Special. The market for the Python in that caliber was bifurcated. Some went to police officers who could buy their own guns but couldn't have a caliber more powerful than .38 Special. Some went to target shooters who were certain that a .38 Special chamber delivered more accuracy than a longer .357 chamber firing .38 ammo, a hypothesis that has never quite been proven or disproven since. At least one Python each were made experimentally in .256 Winchester Magnum and .41 Magnum, but neither ever left the factory. I saw them both in Colt's so called "black museum" in the late 1970s.

A 2 1/2" barrel version was introduced later, though it never sold well; the stubby tube seemed incongruous on the large .41-size frame. Colt had more success later when they offered an 8" barrel aimed at the handgun hunter market. Rarest of all was the special-run 3" barrel. There are rumors of a 5" Python, but I've never seen documentation of one leaving the Colt factory.

While it was a mark of prestige to carry one's own Python on duty, few police departments could justify its high cost

when revolvers were usually bought on bid. Still, there were exceptions. The Colorado Highway Patrol issued 4" blue Pythons until their switch to the S&W .40 caliber autoloader. Georgia State Patrol and Florida Highway Patrol at various times bought small quantities of Pythons, but the deluxe Colts were never standard issue agency-wide for either. Both, like Colorado, have since adopted .40 autos, the Glock for GSP and the Beretta for FHP.

The price continued to soar over the years. In 1980, Smith & Wesson introduced their own .41 -frame .357, the Model 586, which they dubbed the L-frame. This was a brutal blow to Python sales. Copying the Python so slavishly that both brands would fit the same holster and use the same speedloader, the L-frame was a Pythonized S&W with solid instead of ventilated barrel rib, and much more affordable than the Colt. Dan Wesson had copied the distinctive Python silhouette a decade earlier, and the Ruger GP-100 soon shared the same configuration. The Colt Python was no longer unique.

Today, produced as the "Python Elite," the flagship of the Colt revolver fleet comes out of the pricey Colt Custom Shop and carries a suggested retail ten times higher than its original price.

Shooting the Python

"The pride of the (Colt) line is the Python, a big-frame .357 service target revolver with a distinctive ventilated sight rib. At 43 ounces, in 6-inch trim, this is a heavy pistol, excellently suited for target shooting with the .38 cartridge, or hunting with full loads. It is very popular on the PPC circuit, where target shooting is restricted to revolvers. Its single action release is usually superb, combining with its weight and fine sights to provide excellent controllability. The Python is expensive, and it should be." (4)

Those are the words of Jeff Cooper in his classic "Cooper on Handguns," and many users saw the Python in the same light as he did. However, some others saw it as one thing more than a hunting revolver or target .38: the finest quality self-defense revolver that money could buy.

From the range to the street, the added heft at the front was appreciated by knowledgeable shooters. One of the handgun gurus of the time, Chic Gaylord, wrote in 1960, "...I rate Colt's .357 Python as the top performer in its class. The increased weight at the end of the barrel balances the gun in such a way that a very close grouping of shots can be fired with extreme rapidity. This could prove to be a lifesaver in the field." (5)

Some gunsmiths felt the Colt went out of time sooner than the S&W. I can attest from personal experience that when firing .357 Magnum rounds, the Python stood up better than the K-frame S&W, and compared well with the bigger frame Smiths. Jerry Moran told me of one Python he owned that had passed 100,000 rounds of Magnum ammo and was still perking along with only minor tuning. Gun expert Stan Trzoniec has said in print, "The Python is an expensive revolver to be sure, but it will outlast the shooter." (6)

In many years of active use of Pythons, I only found one mechanical weakness in them. I personally broke two of their "unbreakable" floating firing pins. Particularly when the firing pin spring has been lightened by a custom gunsmith, you want to dry fire your Python with snap caps to cushion the impact.

S&W fans hated the two-stage Colt double action pull, no matter how light and smooth. When a master 'smith could make it one-stage, even they got on board with the concept. My old friend John Taffin is a connoisseur nonpareil of the revolver. When others compared the Python to a Rolls, John allowed that at most it was a Cadillac. In his splendid book "Big Bore Sixguns," the scrupulously honest Taffin readily explained how he came to upgrade his opinion of the Python. "The Colt Python is a superb sixgun to be sure," he wrote. "I have always been partial to the double action feel of Smith & Wesson sixguns, however, a dear friend recently went Home and it was his wish that I have his prize Python, an older 6-inch .357 that Fred Sadowski tuned to perfection.

My friend's family concurred and now I have a Python with a double action pull that is as fine as ever found on any slicked-up Smith & Wesson. It is all in knowing how and Sadowski certainly knew how." (7)

Fred Sadowski's breakthrough was turning the two-stage Colt DA pull into a single-stage. Joking at his own heritage, he called the secret "the Polack kink." The Colt pull "stacks" toward the end because of the way the V-shaped leaf main-spring presses against itself at that point. First using a 1911 firing pin and later special tools, Fred would insert the object between the leaves and work the trigger until the spring leaves had stretched apart and no longer pressed against one another. But that's just the tip of the iceberg: he subtly altered the geometry of the Python's insides in many other ways to create his extraordinary double action.

He was joined by two other smiths at the height of the Python customizing art: Jerry Moran of Michigan and Reeves Jungkind in Texas. These men could lighten the DA pull down to an incredible five- or six-pound range without compromising ignition. The secret lay in the Colt design: its longer action and longer hammer throw gave more mechanical advantage, allowing less force to be necessary to drive the trigger-cocking and firing mechanism. The floating firing pin helped, too; by lightening its spring slightly, a hammer falling more lightly (and therefore, driven by less double action trigger pressure) could still reliably ignite even Magnum primers. All of them, of course, enhanced their work with exquisite polishing of moving parts. The result is a combination of lightness and smoothness in the DA stroke that even the finest custom S&W or Ruger simply cannot equal with reliable ignition.

Fred Sadowski's untimely death occurred in 1987 at age 50. Jerry Moran has left gunsmithing for other pursuits. Reeves Jungkind, already retired from police work, is at an age where he'll probably soon retire from pistolsmithing if he hasn't already. Today, I can personally attest to the work of only one other, currently active craftsman who can equal their results on a Colt Python: **Grant Cunningham, West Linn, OR.**

The rumor is passed around at gun shops that Colt only nickel-plated those Pythons that came through with second rate polish jobs. I never saw that substantiated. The few nickel plated Pythons I've handled and fired felt as good as their Royal Blue counterparts. However, this "urban gun legend" continues. Since relatively few Pythons bore the nickel finish - which tended to obscure the superb polish evident on the Royal Blue models, a big part of the whole "pride of ownership" thing - you'd think that the nickel models would command a premium price. Not so. A leading expert on the value of used guns, Ned Schwing, observes: "it is possible that the nickel-plated specimens would bring a 10 percent premium. In my experience this is not always the case as many potential purchasers have a definite preference for the blued finish." (8)

One of the big keys to the Python's popularity among serious shooters is its famous accuracy. It tends to exceed its competitors, Ruger and S&W, and is equaled only by the Dan Wesson in this regard. What makes the Dan Wesson so accurate is its unique barrel system, held under tension front and rear, and the tight lockup of its crane-mounted ball detent. What makes the Colt more accurate encompasses a longer list of achievements in the revolver-maker's art.

Going into the Python project, Colt already had two accuracy advantages over its arch-rival, S&W. One was a "double hand" mechanism that now goes back more than a century. As the hammer begins to fall, a second cylinder hand rises against the pawl and locks the cylinder absolutely dead-nuts solid into place. This gives more consistency in chamber-to-barrel alignment at the moment of the shot. Also, the Python kept Colt's traditional one turn in 14" rifling twist for .38 Special and .357 Magnum. Across the board, but particularly with .38 wad-cutters used by target shooters, this seems to deliver more accuracy than the 1:18.5 rifling twist of the black powder days, used by S&W and Ruger.

In the late 1970s, I did a three part series on the Python for American Handgunner magazine that involved days at the factory debriefing the engineers. They told me that Python bores were tapered by .001" toward the muzzle, to drive the bullet deeper into the rifling. This is, if you think about it, quite a feat of engineering. It may be one reason why for so many years, people who preferred other revolvers paid gunsmiths to install Python barrels on them, creating a "Smolt" when the tube was joined to an S&W and a "Cougar" when mated to a Ruger.

Sadowski would install a massive Douglas barrel if the customer insisted, but only to make it even heavier and

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steadier up front. He told me that his tests showed no custom barrel to be more accurate than the Python's own. By contrast, he did a land office business putting Douglas barrels on PPC Smiths, not just to weight them but to accurize them. Jungkind, Moran, and Cunningham likewise refused to put an aftermarket barrel on a Python.

How accurate? From a Ransom rest with Match ammo, the Python will generally deliver about 1 3/8" groups at fifty yards. This is about what you get out of a custom made PPC revolver with one-inch diameter Douglas barrel. My 8" matte stain- less Python with Bausch & Lomb scope in J.D. Jones' T'SOB mount has given me 2 1/4" groups at 100 yards with Federal's generic American Eagle 158 grain softpoint .357 ammo. The same gun, with Federal Match 148 grain .38 wadcutters, once put three bullets into a hole that measured .450" in diameter when calipered. That's three .38 slugs in a hole a couple of thousandths of an inch smaller in diameter than a single .45 auto bullet.

I shot my first PPC match, and won my first "police combat" trophy, with a 6" Python borrowed from my friend Tom Stackpole more than 30 years ago. In the mid-70s, I hunted at the Y-0 Ranch in Texas with Hal Swiggett. Hal lent me his 6" Herrett- stocked Python, tuned by a young Jerry Moran. I couldn't believe the smoothness. I killed a trophy Corsican ram with two .357 slugs fired from it double action, the first through his chest as he ran and the second breaking his neck at a measured 76 yards. I went home, ordered a brand-new Python, and sent it to Moran without even firing it.

Time went on. The 6" Moran gun won me First Master at the Fraternal Order of Police national shoot in Rhode Island circa 1977. A year later, I put a 4" barrel on it to carry on duty. It's one of the few handguns I've carried on all three police departments I served over the last three decades. Loaded with 125 grain Magnum hollowpoints, I knew it would never let me down. Soon, I owned two Morans, 4" and 6", and two Jungkind Colts, 2 1/2" and 6". My 8" was tuned by the Colt Custom Shop.

I can't say I won every match I shot with a Python, but I won a disproportionate number. Our state shoot for cops used to require a 4" .38 or .357 service revolver with sights and barrel produced by the gun factory, before everyone went to autos. I won the title every time I shot with a Python, once with the stubby Jungkind gun and the rest with the 4" Moran. All wore Elliason sights, a Colt factory option much superior to the Accro sight that came standard on the Python, let alone the sights furnished by Colt's competitors.

I found the Python to be a superbly accurate gun with functionality that went far beyond its pricey prestige. It could help mediocre shooters like me win matches, and its performance made good shooters truly great. Prices are up in the used market these days, but a Colt Python - especially when tuned by some- one like Grant Cunningham - is a high performance revolver that earns its keep with far more than looks and prestige.

- (1) Wilson, R.L., "The Colt Heritage," New York City: Simon & Schuster, undated, P. 272.
- (2) Wilson, R.L., "Colt: An American Legend," New York City: Abbeville Press, 1985, P 272.
- (3) "Pistols and Revolvers of American Make," by Julian Hatcher, in "Gun Guide," 1953-54 edition, published by The Gun Digest Corporation, Chicago, 1953, P. 103.
- (4) Cooper, Jeff, "Cooper on Handguns," Los Angeles, Petersen Publishing Co., 1974, P. 189.
- (5) Gaylord, Chic, "Handgunner's Guide," New York City: Hastings House, 1960, pp. 59-60.
- (6) Trzonlec, Stanley W., "Modern American Centerfire Handguns," Tulsa: Winchester Press, 198 1, P. 65.
- (7) Taffin, John, "Big Bore Sixguns" Iola, WI: Krause Publications, 1997, P. 61.
- (8) Schwing, Ned, "2003 Standard Catalog of Firearms," Iola, WI: Krause Publications, 2002, P. 302.

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Korth Combat .357 Review: The Rolls Royce of Revolvers

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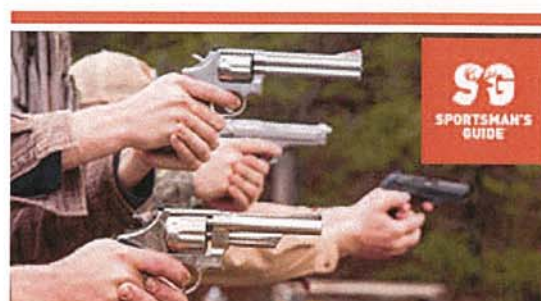
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You know, it's weird to not like a nearly perfect gun like the Korth Combat Revolver. Really. I wonder about myself. Am I just dissing it because that makes me look cool? Is it a case of 'sour grapes' over a gun I could never afford to buy? What's the deal?

I dunno, but I couldn't warm up to the **Korth Combat Revolver** in .357 Magnum, an almost legendary German handgun.



I should like this gun. It is phenomenally well made. Everything about it is meant to be perfect. And it isn't just a matter of exquisite fit and finish. No, the thing is made – completely – out of hardened tool steel, which will last



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Exhibit B

through tens of thousands of full-house magnum rounds without significant wear.

Seriously. You could buy one of these guns, use it heavily through your entire life, and then hand it on to your kid in damned near as good a condition as the day you took it out of the box. This isn't just quality; this is lasting quality. Enduring quality. Almost pretentious quality.

And I guess that's why I have a hard time liking this gun. We were joking about it when we were using one with a six-inch (actually, 5.875-inches) barrel for the **BallisticsByTheInch.com tests**, saying that one of the options on the gun was to have a servant (who came with the gun) load, unload, and clean the thing for you. It honestly made me nervous to handle the damned thing, like I was caught pretending I was something I'm not (that is, wealthy).

But the Korth Combat Revolver really is something different. Something exceptional.



The design of the **revolver** makes it look a bit like a **Colt Python**. But the internals are much stronger than a Python could ever hope to be. And the tolerances are extremely fine.

The cylinder gap is spec'ed at 0.003 inches (industry standard is more like 0.007 inches). Yet, the cylinder is designed to pop out, either for cleaning or for change to accommodate a different cartridge (such as 9mm Luger or 9x21mm). Yeah –



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there's a little lever, and the thing just pops out. Yet, it pops back into position with a minimal cylinder gap.



This was probably a factor in how well the Korth performed in our tests. It did significantly better (in terms of higher bullet velocity) across the board over my six-inch Python, and as well or better than the **Smith & Wesson Model 627** with a 5.625-inch barrel.

Shooting the Korth was – OK. I found the trigger to be harder than I would have expected in double action. Oh, it is completely adjustable, but since it wasn't mine I wasn't going to mess with it.

In single action it was fine. Of course, it felt like glass – wet glass – in terms of how smooth it was. And when it broke it was crisp and clean.

Recoil was fine, even when shooting full-house magnum loads. Partly this was due to the grip design (similar to the custom grips I have on my Python), which made it easy to hold onto the gun solidly, even with my large hands. Partly it was due to the solidness of the gun.

Accuracy? Well, as good as I am. Probably a hell of a lot better, to be honest. The Korth Combat Magnum isn't designed to be a target gun, and isn't the first choice for those who are looking for a target gun for high-end competition. But even though this is a "Combat" model, it has fully adjustable/replaceable sights that were quite good.

The fit and finish really is something to behold, and the model we were using was towards the bottom of their model line,

with *just* a highly polished deep-blue finish (as opposed to plasma or engraved finishes) and lovely walnut grips (ivory and exotic woods are optional). Some of the fittings and exposed pins are chrome, to provide a nice accent. Yeah, when you pick up the gun, it very much feels like you're picking up a true work of art.

Of course, prices start at about \$6,000 for a Korth Combat Magnum these days. Everything is listed as "Price on Request" (P.O.R.) on the Korth website, but the **price list** is about eight years old and you can rest assured that prices have not gone down in the intervening years. You *really have to pay* for this kind of quality.

But, is it worth it? Well, I wouldn't spend that kind of money on one, even if I had it to spend. But that's me. Like I said, I can't warm up to it. But then, I'm also the kind of person who can't see the sense in spending the extra money on a Rolex or a Rolls Royce. I can admire the level of quality and craftsmanship that goes into making those high-end products, though. And there I'd have to say that the Korth Combat Magnum is in the same league.

Pictures courtesy of 1911forum.com

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Warring Siu · Top Commenter

It's kind of like having a house that your afraid to live in, yo in it it's like like a museum, your afraid to move around in it beautiful and valuable, I don't want to shoot it..So then wh

Reply · Like · 4 · February 6, 2012 at 1:55pm



Michael Zeleny · Top Commenter · CEO & Founder at f

Your Korth revolver is a Sport model, rather than Combat. I <http://forums.1911forum.com/showthread.php?t=122799>

It exemplifies the penultimate version of Willi Korth's design characterized by its recoil shield unrelieved for speedloader shroud, similar to that of the Colt Python. It is a very valuat produced by Willi Korth under nominal sponsorship of Dyna Korth firearms, I prefer this variant to its successors.

You can find more information about Korth at the following <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Korth-Waffen/201323365> <http://larvatus.livejournal.com/333566.html> <http://larvatus.livejournal.com/tag/korth>

Reply · Like · 3 · February 8, 2012 at 2:56pm



Bill Cowman · Top Commenter · Cullman, Alabama

Six Thousand bucks for a wheelgun.... No effin way it's wor

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Python Vs Korth Vs GP100

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GoodKat

April 8, 2009, 04:36 PM

I want a new, high quality .357, and I know that the legendary pythons aren't made anymore, so how well would you say a korth matches up to one, and do you think they're worth the money and trouble, or should I just get a GP100?

If you enjoyed reading about "Python Vs Korth Vs GP100" here in TheHighRoad.org archive, you'll LOVE our community. Come join [TheHighRoad.org](#) today for the full version!

Jim Watson

April 8, 2009, 04:41 PM

Or a 686.

I'd rather have plain vanilla and a lot of ammo and accessories than a luxury model.

C-grunt

April 8, 2009, 04:41 PM

This is a joke right???

Your kinda comparing a BMW, a Lamborgini, and then a Chevy truck.

The Pythons are known for great triggers and accuracy, but you pay a premium because they are no longer made. The GP100 is known to be a no frills, rugged revolver. A true working gun.

Ive never met anyone who actually owned a Korth. For 4k I dont think its a wise choice if you plan on actually shooting it often.

Take a look at a S&W 686. Better trigger than a GP100 but not to fancy and just a bit more expensive.

GoodKat

April 8, 2009, 04:43 PM

BTW, whatever I get I plan on putting nickel and exotic wood grips on. I won't be shooting it a lot.

Bronx

April 8, 2009, 04:48 PM

Just word of mouth, my Brother in law was a gunsmith 30+ years(until incarceration for felony...biker..).....He's had some experience with Korths and has just about shot everything out there since the 60's. Korth is his "Holy Grail". For him Colt doesn't even come close and he loves Colts.

earplug

April 8, 2009, 04:48 PM

Python stopped selling due to lack of demand at the price. If you could win anything with them and they held up to steady use, people would be using them. With the cheap offshore labor duplication many old firearms, ever wonder why Colt DA revolvers aren't copied?

When you stop to watch a DA revolver competition, you would be lucky to see a Ruger.

When I start reading about Grandmaster wheelgun shooters using a Korth I'll be interested.
Factor in the cost of ammunition and the upfront cost is easy to take.
Just like the difference between a free dog or a \$1000.00 dog over 12 years.
Cost to same to feed a mutt.
Buy a Smith and Wesson and be happy.

HoosierQ

April 8, 2009, 04:51 PM

Wow...that's some serious apples and oranges you got going there. I am not sure anybody can answer that question very.

I have said this before, I had a beautiful stainless 4" GP100 that I sold when I was really broke (4 kids in college at the same time). I cry every time I think about it. If I were to go out .357 shopping...sure I'd look at 686s...a model 28 if I could find one...but I'd bet dollars to donuts I'd end up buying another GP100...maybe a blue one, maybe a 6" one...but maybe I'd just replace the very same one I sold.

I think GP100s are that good. As far as a "fancy" gun, I think Rugers are meant to serve rough and shoot hard...never seen one fancied up but from what I can tell, the share some profile similarities to the Korth.

GoodKat

April 8, 2009, 04:57 PM

I want a gun that will make me happy when I hold it and occasionally shoot it, and for some reason, Smiths don't make me happy.

rcmodel

April 8, 2009, 04:59 PM

whatever I get I plan on putting nickel and exotic wood grips on.WOW!
An after-market refinish & toss the factory grips on a Korth?

Dawg! :what:

BTW: You left out one of the best .357's ever made.
The S&W Model 27.

rc

Hawk

April 8, 2009, 05:45 PM

See about importing an MR-73.

Here's a head start:
<http://www.hermannsguns.com/Pistols/manurhin/MR73products17.html>

Don't use the MR-88 as a project gun - people will think you spent 1,000.00 plus 500.00 in fees and agony for a Ruger Security Six.

ArmedBear

April 8, 2009, 06:01 PM

I think you should get the Korth and Dura-Coat it, maybe like this.:D

<http://www.lauerweaponry.com/images/CPR25.jpg>

Tamlin

April 8, 2009, 07:30 PM

What about a nice old Dan Wesson?

Blue Brick

April 8, 2009, 08:12 PM

Ruger!

GoodKat

April 8, 2009, 08:22 PM

If only they were still making the Dans...

batmann

April 8, 2009, 09:20 PM

Let's see, Maserati to Corvette to Ford Fusion. All good cars and do the same thing. Your choice of hand guns is the same.

remingtondude58

April 8, 2009, 09:45 PM

I like the cylinder release on the Ruger GP 100, I find it easier being a lefty.

ArmedBear

April 8, 2009, 10:30 PM

Any cylinder release is okay with me, except for a Colt.:)

Ruger may have a reputation for making good but somewhat unrefined guns (compared to the others you list here), but their cylinder release is downright elegant IMO.

DawgFvr

April 8, 2009, 11:42 PM

I recommend the GP100. The money, alone, that you save not buying the S&W you can put to use like slickening the trigger action to glass smooth... bobbing the hammer...getting the grip you want, etc. End product: the most perfect revolver at the right price...customized to your tastes...and it will fire the hottest rounds til the cows come in...hee, hee.

<http://i37.photobucket.com/albums/e61/DawgFvr/GP100/GP1006.jpg>

JohnBT

April 9, 2009, 08:24 AM

"With the cheap offshore labor duplication many old firearms, ever wonder why Colt DA revolvers aren't copied?"

I know. Because it takes talent to put one together. Even Colt doesn't have enough of it to continue making them.

By your logic Swiss watches aren't worth owning because cheap digitals and watches with stamped metal parts have flooded the market.

And if you think you'll win a debate on this topic by concentrating solely on competition requiring fast DA shooting, well you're wrong. Lots of us shoot Pythons regularly and they don't go out of time or break down.

Heh, and look at the number of gunsmiths offering competition package work on new S&W revolvers. Do any of those winners you're talking about shoot a STOCK S&W? :D

John

svtruth

April 9, 2009, 09:00 AM

a model 19?
They are beautiful guns, and a pleasure to shoot.
Good luck.

InRemorse

April 9, 2009, 09:10 AM

What is your intention with the gun? If you just want a nice revolver look at the Ruger Super Blackhawk in .41 magnum with Bisley grips. \$550 bucks or so.

ShadyScott999

April 9, 2009, 08:08 PM

If your checkbook allows...Korth If not Python or custom 686

Confederate

April 9, 2009, 11:14 PM

I've never seen a S&W 686 that didn't shoot at least as good as a Python. Pythons also have undersized pawls (cylinder hands) that make them go out of time more frequently.

Where most .357s crap out is in the chamber throats. Drop a 125-gr. JHP/JSP into EACH chamber. It should stick in each chamber if throated correctly. If they fall through, chances are the accuracy on that particular chamber won't be that accurate. Lead wadcutters are a bit oversized, so if they drop through, you've got real problems, accuracy wise.

If you're buying a gun, take some bullets (not cartridges) with you and try them out. Most Rugers will have one or two chambers where the bullets will fall through. That doesn't mean they're bad guns; it just means they're not going to be target revolvers. The old 686s were pretty good at catching the jacketed bullets, and so are the Pythons.

The Korths are a waste of good money, in my opinion. So, too, are the Manurhins, which look a lot like the Rugers, but have side plates, aren't as strong and are overly expensive.

http://i256.photobucket.com/albums/hh198/jriler/SW686_2c.jpg

The first of the 686s were tack drivers. S&W was determined to beat out the Pythons, and they did a pretty good job.

http://i256.photobucket.com/albums/hh198/jriler/ManurhinMainspring_2.jpg

Looks like a Ruger, but it's a Manurhin.

http://i256.photobucket.com/albums/hh198/jriler/ManurhinF1_A.jpg

Why they'd put a sideplate on is beyond me. Note that the cylinder notch is directly over the chamber, like the S&Ws. Ruger offset theirs to make the guns stronger.

http://i256.photobucket.com/albums/hh198/jriler/Ruger_SS_Assembly_2.jpg

The Ruger Security-Six is one of my all time favorites. Still, a target gun it wasn't. Still, it held its own, and its solid frame added to its strength, making it actually stronger than a 686.

earplug

April 10, 2009, 12:44 AM

This would seem to fit your need of a firearm that might make you happy while you fondle it. Slight cylinder ring would be ok for a fondle make you happy revolver. I have owned and shot two four inch Pythons. I like them better then the six inch I traded off.

Colt Python 4' Blue "B" Engraved Auction # 126597496

Current Bid \$0.00 No Reserve! Started at \$2,500.00
Description for Item # 126597496

NIB 1977 Colt Python 4" 357 "B" Engraved with original paperwork in brown box. This gun come from Colt Custom. This weapon come from a personal collection and has been in a safe for several years. The weapon does have a slight ring around the cylinder but has not been fired. Credit Cards add 4%. We operate a Retail Gun Store all items are subject to in Store Sale. Shipping for this gun is \$30.00 (insurance extra) shipped by UPS. I only shipped to authorize FFL dealers. Texas residents add 8.25% sales tax. Payment should be received within 7 days after the close of the auction. All local laws apply.

Pictures for Item # 126597496

1:
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tipoc

April 10, 2009, 07:50 PM

I want a new, high quality .357, and I know that the legendary pythons aren't made anymore, so how well would you say a korth matches up to one, and do you think they're worth the money and trouble, or should I just get a GP100?

Given the question I'd suggest a Ruger or S&W rather than the Python or a Korth.

I'd go for the Korth under one or more of the following conditions: 1) I have 4,000 dollars to spend. 2) I take pride in owning one of the best revolvers ever made. 3) I shoot bullseye. Standing and shooting one handed from a duelist stance I can shoot 2-3" groups at 25 yards consistantly and on demand and I'd like to shrink my groups by 1/8"

of an inch and win more matches. 4) It doesn't matter to me that the tolerances on the Korth are so tight that after 30-40 rounds the cylinder begins to bind up and I have to remove it and clean it or the cylinder will cease rotating. 5) I already have several 38/357 guns for hunting, self defense, practice, rough duty, etc. so the Korth will be used for what it is best at and that is target shooting or the occasional hunt.

If you care for an expensive gun for target work and can afford it why not a Korth? But if you want a gun you can shoot alot and for daily carry or rough use go with a Ruger or S&W. Either of these will shoot better than 90% of shooters out the box and can be improved on by a good smith.

tipoc

Sunray

April 11, 2009, 03:52 AM

Forget the Korth. They're semi-custom revolvers from Germany. A used Python starts at \$1,000USD.

Buy the revolver that fits your hand best. Too small can be fixed with a change of grips. Not so easy with too big. Possible though, but not if the frame is just too big. No Smith fits my hand. The GP100 does without changing grips. Go to your local gun shop and try a few on for size.

Brian Dale

April 11, 2009, 04:31 AM

BTW, whatever I get I plan on putting nickel and exotic wood grips on. I won't be shooting it a lot. If you want it primarily as art, then buy the one whose lines appeal most strongly to your eye. :)

ceadermtboy

April 11, 2009, 11:17 PM

I personally think the Ruger is the most advanced design. Just think what it would look like if assembled and machined by Korth!

DoubleAction

April 12, 2009, 01:12 AM

I don't have a lot of .357 magnum, but I have I was very picky when looking.

<http://i218.photobucket.com/albums/cc177/DoubleAction77/Double%20Action%20Revolvers/MyColtPythons.jpg>

The 586 / No Dash

<http://i218.photobucket.com/albums/cc177/DoubleAction77/Double%20Action%20Revolvers/586SWgrips2.jpg>

S&W 27-2 / 4" Barrel

<http://i218.photobucket.com/albums/cc177/DoubleAction77/Double%20Action%20Revolvers/27-2.jpg>

<http://i218.photobucket.com/albums/cc177/DoubleAction77/Double%20Action%20Revolvers/27-2Checker-1.jpg>

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Arminius HW 357

.357 Magnum Double
Action Revolver

★★★★★ Be the first to review

Capacity

6

Unloaded Weight

1.71

ROUNDS

LBS

Exhibit C

See all Guns

Write a Review

Revolver Overview

Features

Capacity ⓘ	6 rounds
Sights	Fixed notch
Finish ⓘ	Blued finish steel

The Arminius HW 357 is a Double Action revolver that shoots .357 Magnum ammunition. With a maximum capacity of 6 rounds, the Arminius HW 357 **holds an average amount** compared to other revolvers of the same caliber.

The average .357 Magnum bullet has 526 ft-lbs. of energy at the muzzle, which is more powerful than the

average revolver's round 338 ft-lbs. On average, this round has a muzzle velocity of 1,264 fps , a speed that is faster than other revolver rounds.

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Specifications

+ U.S. Units

Unloaded Weight 1.71 lbs

Barrel Length 2.5 in.

Compared to the average revolver, the .357 Magnum Arminius HW 357 is:

- 2.25 in. shorter in barrel length
- 0.59 lbs heavier
- 1.6x more powerful

+ Metric Units

Suitability for concealed carry is highly subjective and difficult to quantify. Smaller handguns will be easier to conceal but may be more difficult to handle. More powerful ammunition may have greater stopping power but will often be more difficult to fire accurately.

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◀ 6.5 ▶

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Ruger GP100 Standard



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Smith



5.0 
1 user review

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View Full Version : Looking for a Python-like revolver that is not S&W...

twoblink

September 5, 2001, 01:38 AM

I went shooting with a friend, who has a nice Python. It shot well, the groups were all touching.. Shooting 357's were very easy, and shooting 38Spl's felt like .22LR's in that gun.

So now, I kind of want one.

If I don't go python, what are my other options that is NOT S&W?

Dan Wesson? What else??

Thanks guys..
Albert

Jim March

September 5, 2001, 02:14 AM

A Ruger GP100 is just about the same heft as a Python (even eats out of the same model speedloaders), isn't half bad in the accuracy department, is one HELL of a lot tougher, and would need a gunsmith's attention to the trigger to get anywhere close to a Python's trigger feel.

The Python is a delicate beast for it's size. It'll go out of time fairly easy, and a steady diet of hot factory ammo will slowly eat it alive.

You can get a Ruger GP100, have some trigger work done and be out the door for under \$500. Good custom sights are widely available for the Ruger, somewhat less so for the Python and they'll be more expensive. If you have a good gunsmith do a custom barrel on the Ruger in addition to the trigger job, I'd be willing to bet you'll really match the Python's accuracy, the Ruger will still be at least twice as tough and your total bill will be a lot less than a good used Python, probably by hundreds of bux.

AR-10

September 5, 2001, 05:43 AM

I have a 6" Python and a 6" Colt King Cobra. They are similar in size, weight, chambering, and design (sorta). The Python cost me \$800.00, the King Cobra cost me \$450.00. Bought both of them used.

Of the two examples that I own, the King Cobra is the nicer gun. The trigger is better in both double action and single action. The accuracy is great. Look around at gun shows. I see them for sale now and again.

I guess I need to take the Python to a smith. I keep reading that they are THE best, but the trigger pull on mine is very disappointing. It stacks horribly. It is fairly well used, so it must be time for a tune-up.

Brian Busch

September 5, 2001, 07:15 AM

Dan Wesson.
Interchangeable barrels, tack-driving accuracy and the durability of a tank.

SlackO

September 5, 2001, 03:07 PM

another vote for Ruger... Check 'em out.

Redneck2

September 5, 2001, 03:59 PM

All the Python's I've seen were Colts.:confused: :confused:

branrot

September 5, 2001, 05:30 PM

When I think of Revolvers, I think Colt, S&W, and Ruger. Other than the Python and S&W's, you have the King

Exhibit D-1

Cobra and the GP-100. After that you have a mix of other stuff like Dan Wesson, Taurus, etc. My revolvers are all Colts and S&W's, but I like the Rugers too (though I find the SP-101 heavy and the autos too big). If you look around, though, you can probably find a Colt Python at a good price. I picked up my 6 inch nickel Python with factory wood grips in excellent shape for 675.

twoblink

September 5, 2001, 10:58 PM

<http://www.dan-wesson.com>

Is it just me or does the Dan Wesson website no longer exist..?

I like the Dan Wessons. The Hitler Republic of Kalifornia will not allow me to buy Dan Wessons.. That is why I want to move out of here.

I like the pythons, but they are a bit delicate for my blood. Comments from my friends like "Because of my Python, my gunsmith and I are now best friends" doesn't really instill in me, all that much confidence. But I want something that shoots just as well, and is built like a tank. I have a friend with a Ruger, didn't care much for them.

S&W, traitors... not really what I want.

So aside from those, what are my options? King Cobra might be an option, I haven't shot one yet though..

Albert

Blue Duck357

September 5, 2001, 11:06 PM

For the really big bucks crowd thier is the Korth revolver, looks like the SW 586 but cost about 3 times as much as a Python (best of both worlds I guess :)).

I belive they stopped importing them a few years back but you might be able to find one. Seriously they were considered to be one of the finest revolvers made.

4V50 Gary

September 7, 2001, 06:31 PM

While I've worked on the triggers of my Rugers, they never approach the smoothness of the Colt. If you were to graph the pressure curve on the trigger pull, the Colt Python has a long, slow double action trigger. The gradual increase in pressure is attributable to the sear. On the Ruger, it tends to spike. While it can be smooth, it will never approach that of a Python.

Funny but the older S&W use to use the same type of elongated sear on their guns. Then they went to that blocky thing (like what the Ruger has). The German revolver maker, Korth, uses a "roller" attached to the end of its sear (Cylinder & Slide copied their S&W roller sear from Korth). That roller makes for a smoother trigger.

In theory it shouldn't be too hard to make a roller. You simply get round stock, drill it out and drill out the sear. It's then assembled and held in place with music wire. Once fitted, it should be removed and hardened.

lonegunman

September 7, 2001, 07:17 PM

No offense to Ruger fans, but you can dump a ton of \$\$ on a Ruger, and you know what you get? A Ruger.

If you get a \$50 trigger job on a \$300 gun, you still have a \$300 gun if you ever try to sell it.

Personally, I think a lot of this talk about Pythons going out of time is over-reported. I have been shooting pythons 15 or so years, and have never had or seen a timing problem.

Why dont you want a Smith and Wesson? If its because of the boycott, thats great, but you can always be a used but essentially new one, and S&W won't get a dime.

If I was going to buy a 357 mag with the exclusion of the python, I would go with:

- #1 Used S&W 686
- #2 Colt King Cobra
- #3 Used S&W 66
- #4 Ruger GP 100

#5 Ruger Security Six

contender4040

September 7, 2001, 09:11 PM

Shooting double or single action?

A used s&w will not benefit smith in any way and has one of the better double actions pulls.

If a python is too high, a good used colt trooper (not mkIII) will give you roughly the same lockwork as a python for dbl action shooting at a lot less money.

Dan wesson is very accurate in single action but the double action pull is quite a bit different from pythons or smiths.

Ruger is ruger---tough as nails and accurate but usually needs work to smooth out for dbl action shooting.

twoblink

September 8, 2001, 04:10 AM

I prefer to shoot single action.

Yeah, I might consider a S&W, but pre-traitorship only though..

Albert

twoblink

September 8, 2001, 09:12 AM

Hmm. How is the GP100 in a 6"? Any major complaint about it?

It looks like a strong contender that I can afford..

Albert

lonegunman

September 8, 2001, 09:32 AM

I would describe Ruger DA revolvers as coarse, but serviceable.

Borf

September 8, 2001, 11:45 AM

I had a local gunsmith clean up the trigger on my GP-100 quite a bit. Also did a "Bill Jordan" radiusing, which seems to make a difference too. I've still got the original springs, but if I lightened just a little it would improve it even more, as the ruger's pull is a little heavy.

The factory trigger kinda stunk... it's a whole different beast now - still no smooth old s&*, but approaching "fine".

DAVID NANCARROW

September 8, 2001, 12:07 PM

This must be "the lifestyles of the rich and shameless". A Korth? C'mon already. Nice revolver, but I think for the money, I could buy a Colt or similar, put some parts in it, and have a pot load of money left for grips I like/holsters/optional finish/ammo for practice. Saw a nice S&W 27 with a 6 inch barrel go for \$350 w/ammo which is not unusual around DFW. You might not be able to hod rod loads in a Python, but then it was designed as a target pistol, so I expect smooth and accurate with mid loads. Any N frame S&W ought to take the same abuse as a Ruger. Nothing against a Ruger-they all seem to be hell for strong, and some of them can be very accurate, and can't squawk about the price at all. Scares me to hear people who think you just have to have a \$1500+sidearm or you couldn't hit a barn if you were inside it. There is such a thing as buying what you want/can afford, and working with it until you get used to its personality glitches, but I don't hear much of that anymore.

bfj2

September 8, 2001, 03:22 PM

S&W did not make the Python colt did. and they just brought it back so juat ask you gun shop 2 get you one.

Anthony

September 8, 2001, 04:38 PM

I'm suprised no one has mentioned the Smython conversion.

Besides the action and its sensuous looks, the barrel was always the hallmark of the Python. It uses a different rifling than any other model of revolver in .357 Magnum. This accounts for its amazing accuracy.

The Python action was not always the best fit for many shooters who needed a rapid fire sixgun.

The Smython conversion was the mating of a Python barrel with a Smith & Wesson K or L-frame. The conversion is quite clean and looks very exotic. Davis Custom out in CA does the conversion routinely, but I'm sure there are many other smiths who have done the same.

A Smith & Wesson action mated to the most accurate factory produced barrel in the industry. Quite a combination when you think about it.

If you don't already have one, get a pre-agreement S&W and give Davis a call. The conversion was quite reasonable as he used to swap the S&W barrel for the Python one.

One more possibility would be having a very accomplished gunsmith build you a match grade barrel using the Python's rate of twist with a custom shroud mounted onto your choice of action (e.g., S&W). I looked into this once with Maryland Gun Works and Lou quoted \$300.00 for the barrel work.

One last suggestion would be the mating of a pre-agreement S&W K or L-frame with a Dan Wesson barrel and shroud. This concept originated with Jim Cirillo of NYPD Stakeout Squad fame. There are several photos of this conversion and instructions in his book "Guns, Bullets, and Gunfights." Given Cirillo's considerable background in firearms competition, law enforcement, and handgun hunting I'm quite certain he is qualified to speak of such a conversion. As the Dan Wesson shroud roughly equates the Python with a rib and underlug perhaps the look would appeal to you.

Good shooting.

- Anthony

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15%... need I say more?

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What .357 magnum revolver is equivalent to a colt python?

I was looking to buy a colt python, but they have stopped making them, and the price is a little much.

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9 answers

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Answers

Relevance

Best Answer: Smith and Wesson L frame (model 686) would be your next best bet, then run it through the custom shop
http://www.smith-wesson.com/webapp/wcs/...
get the master revolver package for \$155, and if you desire, get the \$250 high bright polish job.
If you are going this route, buy a used one, because they will be refinishing it externally and internally, so your 'used' gun will be turned into basically a 'new' one.
akluis · 4 years ago
2 1
Comment

Take a look at Rugers. They have a number of different 357 mag revolvers. They are well made and quite solid in construction. Maybe not as smooth as a Smith or Python but that is part of the reason they are cheaper. Website is below.
Source(s):
http://www.ruger.com/index.html
USAFisnumber1 · 4 years ago
2 0
Comment

The Colt Python is no longer in production. The better S&Ws come close but no cigar. The only real 'rival' to the Python that I am aware of is the Korth, a little known, extremely high-dollar handgun catering to the mega wealthy (think sultans & royalty). The old S&W Model 27 was probably the Pythons only rival.
H
H · 4 years ago
3 2
Comment

Look at the Colt Trooper.
It's the poor-man's Python.
Source(s):
Avid shooter/Experienced Machinist/Or a Security Six... they're tougher...
Gregg Andrews · Yahoo Crime Squad · 4 years ago
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Exhibit D-2

https://answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=20111016094729AA72o4Q

5/5/2015



Plenty of copycats around. The S&W 586 and 686 for one. Taurus and others have these Python look alikes.

WC · 4 years ago

0 0

Comment



I had a Ruger GP100 with a six inch barrel and I still regret selling it.
I could hit a 8 1/2"x11" sheet of paper at 100 yards every time with that gun.
Just a thought...

Fang · 4 years ago

1 1

Comment



Isn't that a Call Of Duty gun?

Anyways. As others have said, they took it out of production in 1996.
There's also 2 models, the Standard and Target, the latter being the one in the video game, and being made in .38 special.

The closest thing to it is the Colt Anaconda or Diamondback,

Oliver G · 4 years ago

1 4

Comment



Look at the Smith & Wesson 686.

MJ · 4 years ago

3 0

Comment



.357 Magnum
Colt Anaconda
Colt Diamondback
Armtech SMOLT

Source(s):
Wikipedia

J. · 4 years ago

0 9

Comment

What .357 magnum revolver is equivalent to a colt python?



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Hi folks. We have added a new Introduction forum, where new members can introduce themselves. We hope that everyone will stop by occasionally and say hi. [Introductions Forum](#)

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<p>09-06-2013, 00:10</p> <p>xmanhockey7 Senior Member</p>  <p>Join Date: Dec 2010 Location: Michigan Posts: 1,937</p>	<p>A Revolver Comparable to the Colt Python?</p> <p>So lately I've been considering getting a revolver. My step-dad used to own a Colt Python Elite with nickel finish and I believe a 2.5" barrel. He's since sold it which disappoints me, because I loved shooting that thing. Looking at the price of Pythons I'll either need to wait at least a decade before buying one or try to get something similar. To me what was so great about that gun was the grip, the sights, and most importantly the trigger. Oh was that baby smooth! My question is are there any other revolvers who's triggers are as good or even near as good as the Colt Pythons? I'm not a big revolver guy so my experience is very limited.</p> <p>My current avatar is the logo for my group Young Guns of Michigan. Check us out on Facebook!</p> <p><i>Last edited by xmanhockey7; 09-06-2013 at 00:12..</i></p> <p>Quote</p>
<p>09-06-2013, 00:15</p> <p>countrygun Senior Member</p> <p>Join Date: Mar 2012 Posts: 17,068</p>	<p>S&W 686</p> <p>I have a Python and a 686 (and more other .357s). IMO a 686 can be as smooth as a Python if worked on by someone who knows what they are doing.</p> <p>Some might say a Ruger GP 100 and I have 2 of those that have never been touched internally so I don't know how they are "slicked up".</p> <p>Quote</p>

Exhibit D-3



09-06-2013, 00:43

#3

Berto
woo wooJoin Date: Sep 2003
Location: WA
Posts: 31,775Glock Talk
Contributor

You can get a K or L frame S&W to die for with a little work and a spring kit.

The West is the Best.

Quote

09-06-2013, 00:57

#4

fnfalman
Chicks Dig ItJoin Date: Oct 2000
Location: California & New
Mexico, US
Posts: 61,995Glock Talk
Contributor

Colt Diamondback, but they cost more than Pythons.

Posted using [Outdoor Hub Campfire](#)

Can you dig it?

Quote

09-06-2013, 00:59

#5

bac1023
Senior MemberJoin Date: Sep 2004
Location: PA
Posts: 99,732

In stock form, there is nothing that really compares to the Python for less money. As others have mentioned, you can get a Smith and get some action work done, but duplicating the Python action will not be easy. There are some other old Colts that pretty much had the same action, but without the same price tag.

By the way, if your dad's gun had a nickel finish and/or a 2.5" barrel, it wasn't an Elite model. Elites were blued or stainless (some bright stainless) with a 4" or 6" barrel. Having said that, the older Pythons were smoother anyway.

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Quote

09-06-2013, 01:01

#6

bac1023

Quote:

















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<p>Senior Member</p>  <p>Join Date: Sep 2004 Location: PA Posts: 99,732</p> <p></p>	<p>Originally Posted by fnfalman </p> <p><i>Colt Diamondback, but they cost more than Pythons.</i></p> <p>Posted using Outdoor Hub Campfire</p> <p>Sone DBs do cost more than some Pythons, but they still don't have the Python action.</p> <p>To view links or images in signatures your post count must be 10 or greater. You currently have 0 signatures.</p> <p></p>
<p>09-06-2013, 01:45 #7</p> <p>Berto woo woo</p>  <p>Join Date: Sep 2003 Location: WA Posts: 31,775</p> <p>Glock Talk Contributor</p> <p></p>	<p>Quote:</p> <p>Originally Posted by bac1023 </p> <p><i>Sone DBs do cost more than some Pythons, but they still don't have the Python action.</i></p> <p>My local haunt has a Diamondback at \$795 IIRC. Looks like a later model. Good point on the older .41 frame/OP guns, they had the same actions save the hammer and could be just as slick as the pythons.</p> <p>The West is the Best.</p> <p></p>
<p>09-06-2013, 01:48 #8</p> <p>bac1023 Senior Member</p>  <p>Join Date: Sep 2004 Location: PA Posts: 99,732</p> <p></p>	<p>Quote:</p> <p>Originally Posted by Berto </p> <p><i>My local haunt has a Diamondback at \$795 IIRC. Looks like a later model. Good point on the older .41 frame/OP guns, they had the same actions save the hammer and could be just as slick as the pythons.</i></p> <p>Yeah, some old Troopers, Official Police, and Officers Model Match guns have the same action.</p> <p>Berto, I'd grab that DB if it's in decent shape.</p> <p>To view links or images in signatures your post count must be 10 or greater. You currently have 0 signatures.</p> <p></p>
<p>09-06-2013, 02:29 #9</p> <p>Tiro Fijo Senior Member</p> <p>Join Date: May 2011 Posts: 6,281</p> <p></p>	<p>I own a Det. Special and a Diamondback as well have owned a Python. They don't shoot any better than a well tuned S&W or Ruger with correct handloads. You have to handload to wring out the best accuracy. The thing with the Colt actions on the aforementioned guns is that they use an antiquated two pronged pawl (hand) that engages upon firing. They are a SOB to time and work on and there are no new parts. Right now I only know of two gunsmiths in the country that work on Colt DA revolvers and one, Grant Cunningham, hasn't accepted work in years as he is so backlogged</p> <p>Colt DA revolver prices right now are insane due to a few people with boatloads of cash buying all Pythons for outlandish prices. It's gotten out of hand & I would not buy any Python now unless it was a pre-insanity price of under 1K, which eliminates the Internet sites.</p> <p>The main thing with say a Colt is pride of ownership as Colt went the extra mile on Pythons for fit & finish, especially those made in the 50's & 60's.</p> <p></p>
<p>09-06-2013, 02:44 #10</p> <p>MrMurphy Lifetime Membership *****</p>  <p>Join Date: Jan 2001 Location: Buried in the X-files Posts: 31,720</p> <p></p>	<p>A Python out of the box is pretty hard to match (having shot about 10 of them in all barrel lengths). I've owned about five Smiths and a Ruger Security-Six, shot dozens and dozens of all kinds of other revolvers, so I have some basis for comparison.</p> <p>A Smith Model 19 or 66, 4", or a 686, with some trigger work done will shoot as good as or better than Python out of the box does, not go out of time as easily, and cost you less.</p> <p>I've shot a friend's 2.5" 66 which had a DA trigger pull of four pounds and a SA trigger pull measured in ounces (around six I think?). Of all the revolvers I have shot in a long, long time shooting (going on 24 years just with revolvers) that had the single best trigger pull I've EVER seen in a DA revolver, far surpassing a Python, even a Python that had been worked on.</p>


	<p>The trigger job cost him less than \$100. Total cost of gun+job was under \$700 and that included a little finish work. It was the closest thing I've ever shot to a psychic wheelgun, the thing fired when you thought about it and at no other time. VERY smooth trigger, as well as being light without being stupid light.</p> <p>"And Shepherds we shall be. For thee, my Lord for thee. Power hath descended forth from thy hand, that our feet may swiftly carry out thy command. So we shall flow a river forth to thee and teeming with souls shall it ever be. In nomine Patris, et fili, et Spiritus Sancti. Amen."</p> <p></p>
<p>09-06-2013, 03:52</p> <p>ede Bama's Friend</p> <p>Join Date: Jun 2004 Location: L.A. Posts: 10,951</p> 	<p>#11</p> <p>A Carmonized S&W has a much better DA trigger than any revolver I've seen or shot, under 6 pounds and smooth like greased ice.</p> <p>Steel Challenge, NSSF, USPSA PM Black Diamond 538 F&AM Bamatrooper taught Chuck Norris how to shoot.</p> <p></p>
<p>09-06-2013, 04:02</p> <p>glock2740 Gun lover.</p> <p>Join Date: Jun 2008 Location: NW Ark. Posts: 18,914</p> 	<p>#12</p> <p>Taurus!!!!!!!!!!!!!!</p> <p></p> <p></p>
<p>09-06-2013, 07:32</p> <p>ca survivor Senior Member</p>  <p>Join Date: Dec 2011 Location: Florida Posts: 8,170</p> 	<p>#13</p> <p>Quote:</p> <p>Originally Posted by glock2740 </p> <p>Taurus!!!!!!!!!!!!!!</p> <p></p> <p>yes, that's funny   </p> <p></p>
<p>09-06-2013, 08:30</p> <p>Bruce M Senior Member</p>  <p>Join Date: Jan 2010 Location: S FL Posts: 27,508</p> 	<p>#14</p> <p>My guess is that for a first revolver that a S&W K or L frame perhaps with some trigger work would produce nearly the same practical results as would a Python. Which is not to say the Python does not have a better trigger but that the results of shooting them has as more to do with the shooter as it does with the revolver.</p> <p>Bruce I never talked to anyone who had to fire their gun who said "I wished I had the smaller gun and fewer rounds with me" Just because you find a hundred people who agree with you on the internet does not mean you're right.</p> <p></p>
<p>09-06-2013, 09:14</p> <p>bac1023 Senior Member</p>  <p>Join Date: Sep 2004 Location: PA Posts: 99,732</p> 	<p>#15</p> <p>Quote:</p> <p>Originally Posted by Bruce M </p> <p><i>My guess is that for a first revolver that a S&W K or L frame perhaps with some trigger work would produce nearly the same practical results as would a Python. Which is not to say the Python does not have a better trigger but that the results of shooting them has as more to do with the shooter as it does with the revolver.</i></p> <p>I agree Bruce. Duplicating the feel of the Python trigger and action is no easy task.</p> <p>A nicely worked over Smith can be close and certainly even a little lighter in some cases, but it's hard to replicate the Python's "personality", so to speak.</p> <p>It will certainly never look as good, in my opinion. The Python is the nicest looking revolver ever built, as far as I'm concerned.</p> <p><small>To view links or images in signatures your post count must be 10 or greater. You currently have 0 signatures.</small></p>

Last edited by bac1023; 09-06-2013 at 09:16..


Quote

09-06-2013, 09:55 #16


Batesmotel
Senior Member




Join Date: Apr 2007
Location: Utah
Posts: 14,516

Quote:
Originally Posted by **glock2740** 

Taurus!!!!!!!!!!!!!!




Only if they are being used as paperweights. 

It tied the room together.


Quote

09-06-2013, 09:58 #17


bac1023
Senior Member




Join Date: Sep 2004
Location: PA
Posts: 99,732

Quote:
Originally Posted by **glock2740** 

Taurus!!!!!!!!!!!!!!






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Quote

09-06-2013, 10:08 #18

SigFTW
Senior Member



Join Date: Nov 2010
Location: TX
Posts: 2,305


It's hard to beat the Colt Python trigger action, it's the smoothest DA I have ever felt.

Spent brass to me is like the ring to Gollum "We wants it, we needs it. Must have the precious"

Quote

09-06-2013, 10:13 #19

capnjim01
Senior Member




Join Date: Apr 2006
Location: north carolina
Posts: 2,743

Dan Wesson 15 series, from the late 70's early 80's. I had the 15-6 heavy vented barrel and it was very accurate. It didn't have the absolute smoothness of a Python but it was very good.

Quote

09-06-2013, 10:31 #20

ArmoryDoc
Senior Member



The nearest thing is like mentioned, either a 686 or a 586. Get you an early model (up to say -3) and get a fluff and buff on the trigger by a reputable smith. You wont regret it. My 4" 586 is a dream shooter.

Join Date: May 2006
Location: Kansas
Posts: 6,009



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« M&P 15 Sport | Rundown on steel cased ammo. »

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